

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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41

ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0972

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTO DOMINGO 2905

EXDIS

FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIN, EMIN, EIND

SUBJECT: ALCOA BAUXITE NEGOTIATIONS

REF : A) STATE 151562; B. SD 2877; C. SD 2900

1. OF THE MANY DOMINICANS WHO CLAIM CLOSE FRIENDSHIP WITH AND EASY ACCESS TO PRESIDENT BALAGUER, THREE CAN MAKE SUCH ASSERTIONS MORE TRUTHFULLY THAN MOST: RAFAEL BELLO ANDINO, THE PRESIDENT'S PRIVATE SECRETARY; RAMON FONT BERNARD, PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR, AND POLIBIO DIAZ, LONG TIME POLITICAL ALLY OF THE PRESIDENT'S AND ONE OF HIS CLOSEST ADVISORS. IN ORDER TO PREPARE THE TERRAIN FOR MY DEMARCHE TO BALAGUER AND TO GIVE ALCOA REP HUGHSON A HELPING HAND, I ASKED FONT BERNARD TO DROP BY FOR A DRINK EARLY LAST EVENING. IN THE CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE CHARACTERISTIC OF MY PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS WITH FONT, I EXPLAINED OUR PREOCCUPATION OVER THE MANNER IN WHICH THE ALCOA NEGOTIATIONS WERE PROCEEDING. WE WERE STRUCK BY THE PARALLEL WITH THE JAMAICAN SITUATION, E.E. INITIATE BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH A RIGID GOVERNMENT POSITION AND WHEN THAT POSITION WAS NOT MET, PASS LEGISLATION EMBODYING THE POSITION. I TOLD HIM FRANKLY THAT THE JAMAICAN ACTIONS HAD NOT SET AT ALL WELL WITH US (WE WERE PARTICULARLY ALERGIC TO SEEING US COMPANIES FORCED TO NEGOTIATE WITH A PISTOL AT THEIR HEADS) AND THAT WE WOULD BE MOST UNHAPPY TO SEE SUCH A FRIEND OF THE US AS THE DOMREP COPY THE JAMAICANS.

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MORE FUNDAMENTALLY, WE WERE VERY SERIOUSLY CONCERNED OVER WHAT

SEEMED TO BE AN EMERGING PATTERN OF NATIONS WHICH IN COMBINATION POSSESSED A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF AN IMPORTANT NATURAL RESOURCE ACTING IN CONCERT TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE REST OF THE WORLD AND TO THEIR OWN DETRIMENT AS WELL SINCE THEY WERE NOT IMMUNE TO THE INFLATIONARY PRESSURES RESULTING FROM SUCH ACTION. WE WERE LOOKING TO THE DOMREP TO PURSUE ITS NATIONAL INTEREST BASED PRAGMATICALLY UPON THE REALITIES OF THE DOMINICAN SITUATION AND TO AVOID BECOMING PART OF A MOVEMENT THAT WAS LEADING ALL OF US INTO TROUBLE. IN SHORT, I URGED THAT THE GODR FIND A DOMINICAN NOT A JAMAICAN SOLUTION AND THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS RETURN TO THE BARGAINING TABLE WHERE THE ISSUES COULD BE RESOLVED ON THEIR MERITS AND WITHOUT ANY THREAT OF LEGISLATION.

2. FONT REPLIED THAT THE PALACE HAD NOT INITIATED THE LEGISLATION. (COMMENT: WE HAVE HEARD FROM OTHER SOURCES THAT THE DRAFT LEGISLATION CAME FROM THE OFFICE OF ING. FERNANDO PERICHE VIDAL, ONE OF THE GOVERNMENT NEGOTIATORS, AND THAT PRESIDENT BALAGUER IS IRKED THAT THE MATTER WAS PRESENTED IN THE LEGISLATURE). FONT CONTINUED THAT HE HAD PERSONALLY BEEN ENTRUSTED WITH A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT TO GERMAN ORNES, OWNER-EDITOR OF THE PRESTIGIOUS DAILY "EL CARIBE", TO THE EFFECT THAT BALAGUER FULLY AGREED WITH ORNES' EDITORIAL ON THE ALCOA SITUATION, PARTICULARLY IN THAT THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC WAS NOT JAMAICA AND THEREFORE DOMINICAN SOLUTIONS MUST BE FOUND. FONT CONTINUED THAT HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT A REASONABLE SOLUTION WOULD BE FOUND AND THAT HE WOULD CONVEY TO THE PRESIDENT THAT EVENING THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACHED TO THE DOMREP NOT FALLING INTO THE JAMAICAN PATTERN AND OUR DEEP DISTASTE FOR NEGOTIATIONS UNDER THREAT OF LEGISLATION.

3. LATER LAST NIGHT I DISCUSSED THE SITUATION WITH ALCOA REP HUGHSON AND INFORMED HIM OF THE GIST OF THE FOREGOING. HUGHSON SEEMED RELAXED AND SAID HE WAS GETTING ENCOURAGING SIGNALS FROM THE PALACE THAT A REASONABLE SOLUTION WOULD BE FOUND. IT SHOULD BE NOTED HERE THAT POLIBIO DIAZ IS A LAWYER FOR ALCOA ON A RETAINER BASIS AND THEREFORE HUGHSON'S ENTREE TO THE PRESIDENT. HUGHSON INFORMED ME THAT THE VERY HELPFUL "LISTIN DIARIO" EDITORIAL (REF C) HAD BEEN WRITTEN BY FRANK MARINO HERNANDEZ WHO SAID THAT THE EDITORIAL WAS THE FIRST OF FOUR PIECES THAT WOULD APPEAR WITH THE GOAL OF FORCING THE GOVERNMENT NEGOTIATORS

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BACK TO THE TABLE IN A MORE FLEXIBLE FRAME OF MIND. HERNANDEZ AND I HAD DISCUSSED THE ALCOA SITUATION IN DETAIL LAST FRIDAY (JULY 12).

4. I AM LUNCHING A DEUX TODAY WITH BELLO ANDINO.
HURWITCH

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NNN

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